
SECTION II. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IN SUPPORT OF URBAN EDUCATION REFORM

This section of the *Guide for Implementing Urban Education Reform in Abbott Districts* does the following:

- Introduces the two offices primarily assigned to support urban education reform;
- Describes the roles and responsibilities of School Review and Improvement (SRI) teams; and
- Highlights other DOE offices with responsibilities related to urban education reform.

Regulations Related to Section II N.J.A.C. 6A:24

1.2 – Definitions

1.3 – Assignment of Department School Review and Improvement Teams

A. OFFICE OF PROGRAM REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT (OPRI) AND OFFICE OF FISCAL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT (OFRI)

The Department of Education (DOE) has formed two offices to aid in the implementation of Whole School Reform -- the Office of Program Review and Improvement (OPRI) and the Office of Fiscal Review and Improvement (OFRI). The Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Student Services is responsible for overseeing OPRI and the Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Finance oversees OFRI. Working as a team, staff members from these offices are assigned as School Review and Improvement (SRI) teams to work with districts and schools by providing field-based assistance pertaining to urban education reform. Both offices collaborate closely with other divisions and offices within the department in areas related to urban education reform. A directory of these divisions and offices is located in Section XI.

OPRI reviews literature and collaborates with state and national experts on school improvement, organizes and facilitates the delivery of professional development services for DOE staff and develops evaluation data to track the progress of Abbott districts.

OFRI reviews annual budget submissions and makes recommendations for reallocation and/or additional state funding. Staff from this office also complete fiscal review and improvement reports, conduct the Comprehensive Operational and Performance Audits (COPAs), and conduct state aid audits for Abbott districts.

OFRI collaborates closely with the Office of Fiscal Policy and Planning which is responsible for the development and maintenance of fiscal policy for all districts, including Abbott districts. The office provides guidance and pronouncements on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The office administers the annual school budget process, the annual school audit process, and the defeated school budget process. These responsibilities include the development of a zero-based approach to the district budget, and the development of school-based budgeting and accounting procedures mandated in Abbott districts and for possible future use in other districts.

B. SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The special assistant for school improvement assists schools where students are at risk of not achieving Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). This special assistant to the Commissioner serves as his representative to the community at large regarding the Urban Education Initiative; chairs the State-operated School District WSR Consortium; is responsible for ensuring that Whole School Reform schools receive training pursuant to Abbott regulations; and is the principal liaison to the Commissioner's Urban Advisory Committee and other community-based organizations. The Parent Participation Award recognition program is run through this office, as are a variety of other events designed to engage parents, school personnel, and community members in training and other aspects related to WSR.

C. SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT (SRI) TEAMS

SRI teams, consisting of staff from the Divisions of Student Services and Finance, are the key to assisting schools and districts with their WSR initiative. Abbott regulations require the Commissioner to designate department staff to serve on School Review and Improvement teams. In order to accomplish this, the Commissioner ensures that SRI team members complete appropriate training in WSR.

SRI teams are based at the Program Improvement Regional Centers (PIRCs) in northern, central and southern New Jersey. An SRI team is assigned to each school implementing WSR in order to facilitate WSR exploration, implementation, and the development of the Required Programs in Secondary Schools plan. The primary roles of SRI teams are to do the following:

- Work with the building principal, SMT, central office and local board of education to ensure the effective implementation of site-based management and comprehensive school reform;
- Attend SMT meetings and participate in the school's ongoing WSR efforts;
- Serve as liaisons between schools and the department, and as sources of technical assistance in programmatic and fiscal areas;
- Provide both the programmatic and fiscal assistance necessary for Abbott districts to meet WSR mandates and promote the achievement of the CCCS;
- Identify training and resource needs;

- Facilitate and collaborate with SMTs in the development of school-level plans that provide a prescription for school improvement;
- Assist in building the school's capacity to solve problems, plan and implement systems to support high student achievement;
- Identify experts and resources to facilitate district and school improvement efforts;
- Work across divisions and offices to ensure articulation and coordination of all programs;
- Collaborate with WSR developers to facilitate support for Abbott districts;
- Provide technical assistance and facilitate training relevant to school-based budgeting and other finance and business issues;
- Facilitate and support school improvement initiatives and site-based decision-making;
- Consult with chief school administrator on the transfer/removal of principal/teacher;
- Consult with SMTs to ensure that curriculum, instruction and instructional delivery are aligned with the NJCCCS;
- Consult with SMT members to ensure implementation of all aspects of Whole School Reform;
- Consult with SMTs to ensure implementation of the school-level educational technology plan;
- Consult with SMTs to ensure that education programs, including cocurricular and extracurricular activities, are provided to address the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.
- Consult with SMTs to ensure that a program of professional development is being utilized; and
- Ensure that SMT members have been trained.

D. CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact information can be found in Section XI.